

**Virginia Comprehensive Assistance Network [VA CAN] Meeting
December 16, 2003**

Meeting Notes:

Attendance:

Richard Rasmussen – DEQ, Andy Feagans-DMAS, Eric Olson– DPOR, Keith Boisvert – DEQ and Chuck McCarty - DEQ.

Note: **Bold** indicates first time attendee.

1. Opening/Introductions

Round-the-table introductions and descriptions of programs represented.

2. May 13th Event Funds' Status

It was reported at the last meeting that \$1,233.61 is remaining from the event.

Richard discussed possibly using some of that money to have Adam Saslow attend a future meeting to facilitate the group as it discusses it's future. The group agreed to invite Adam to a future meeting, most likely the April Meeting. We need to set up a planning committee for this meeting. Volunteers?

3. Future – Discussion

1. The group discussed possible topics, including: a website; a list serve for information sharing; a strategic plan [brought up at the last meeting]; focusing on being a network to share program information, program activities that might benefit other programs, information about upcoming events, and grants all in an informal setting [a kind of “coffee house”]; development of a VA CAN box [road kit] with materials/handouts from all the members that could be taken to shows/talks/etc.; and VA CAN sponsor a Third Providers Forum.

2. One concern expressed was that developing a strategic plan connoted formality of the organization which might possibly inhibit the group and the informal networking structure. It was felt that VA CAN should continue to be a group which shares information, creates partnerships and networks, and strives to provide a better information network for our clients. The network provides an information platform for the benefit of each organization within the network. It was suggested that we might even try to build in an informal atmosphere by suggesting that a future meeting be held over lunch or dinner to allow more networking, sharing and brainstorming of ideas. Those that think that they could and would be interested in participating in this type of meeting format are encouraged to provide feedback to Richard Rasmussen.

3. Eric Olson mentioned his participation in a recent seminar type event along with the IRS, and the Hampton SBDC. It was held in at the Hampton SBDC and designed to provide information

about contract licensing, taxes, and services offered by the SBDC. They presented information about their programs and about starting a business to over 40 potential small business owners. He also mentioned the Professional Licensing and Education Technical Committee [?] is working to mandate training of students to fill various jobs [ie. cosmetologists, auto mechanics, etc.] and this would be an excellent means to reach future small business owners/people.

Eric mentioned that the VA CAN emails should include success stories to demonstrate how active membership in the group can be a positive to each member.

4. Show and Tell

Richard discussed how the SBAP is pursuing a USEPA grant to develop an Environmental Results Program that applies to auto body shops in Northern Virginia. "Environmental Results" is an alternative to traditional permitting.

Eric discussed various consumer protection materials, including distribution of a postcard about unlicensed contractors.

Andy distributed copies of a FAMIS brochure and application. He mentioned that in May there will be a "Cover the Uninsured Week". He also mentioned a future roundtable/focus group to discuss health coverage for uninsured workers. Both he and Eric described the often subtler associations of the individual organizations and programs that can create dynamite partnerships. General contractors hire both skilled and unskilled labor who often do not have health insurance coverage for their families. FAMIS becomes a wonderful information piece and opportunity for those contractors to provide information and opportunity to their workers.

Keith mentioned that on April 2 there will be an "Alternate Fuel Vehicle Day" event to be held in conjunction with Hampton Roads Clean Cities. He also mentioned that May 7 will be "Clean Commute Day".

5. Need Additional Information for VA CAN Booklet

There is still a need for the "blue page" information from most VA CAN members. It would include a one sentence description of each program you want listed with the appropriate contact information [phone number, address, web site, etc.].

6. Follow Up/Next Meeting

Our NEXT MEETING -February 25, 2004. Tentatively to be held at DEQ Piedmont Regional Offices 10:00AM. If the interest is present to conduct an informal luncheon meeting or some other venue we will try to make those arrangements. Let me have your thoughts on this subject.

Please RSVP by February 20, 2004.